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SUBJECT: SYRIA/LEBANON: EGYPT "STILL STUDYING" MEHLIS  
REPORT

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1. (SBU) Senior Egyptian Presidency and MFA officials have so far offered minimal reaction to the Report of the International Independent Investigation Commission Established Pursuant to UNSCR 1595, otherwise known as the "Mehlis Report." Presidential Spokesman Soliman Awad told the DCM during an October 21 conversation that Egypt "was studying the report thoroughly." He did not provide a time when the GOE would respond in greater detail. Awad, however, told reporters October 22 that the report "should not be read superficially" as it indicates that "the investigations are not yet over." Awad also conveyed the message that the GOE was still "studying the report."

2. (SBU) Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit, shortly after his October 21 return from Moscow and Vienna, provided a similar response to reporters saying only that the Mehlis report "should be read carefully and dealt with delicately, to avoid further tensions in the Middle East." MFA contacts repeated similar sentiments to poloff October 23, suggesting Egypt would await results of UN Security Council deliberations on the Mehlis and Larsen reports before commenting more fully.

RICCIARDONE